

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Adopted and Filed Emergency After Notice

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, 481A.48, and 455A.5(6), the Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby amends Chapter 91, "Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons," Iowa Administrative Code.

This chapter contains the regulations for hunting waterfowl and coot and includes season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, and areas open to hunting. These amendments adjust the season dates to comply with federal regulations and to ensure that the seasons open on weekends and add a special September teal season for up to 16 days for all species of teal.

These zones and season dates provide different opening and closing dates for the duck season in each zone. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering expanded teal hunting opportunities in response to continued high teal populations. The additional season will not adversely impact teal numbers and will allow Iowa hunters 16 more days of recreational hunting opportunity during the peak migration period for teal.

Notice of Intended Action was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on April 30, 2014, as **ARC 1450C**. A public hearing was held on May 20, 2014. Twelve comments were received, and all supported the changes in general. However, four commenters asked that days be added to the end of the season, while four others asked to keep the dates as proposed.

Two substantive changes from the Notice of Intended Action have been made. The bag limit for canvasbacks was reduced from two canvasbacks to one canvasback due to changes in the federal regulations and concerns about lower canvasback numbers. The season dates for the youth waterfowl hunt were changed from September 27, 2014, and September 28, 2014, to October 11, 2014, and October 12, 2014 in the south zone and to October 18, 2014, and October 19, 2014, in the Missouri River zone to coincide with the Canada goose open season dates.

The Commission finds, pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.5(2)"b"(2), that the normal effective date of these amendments should be waived and that these amendments should be made effective upon filing as they confer a benefit on the public by establishing a September 6, 2014, start date for the waterfowl hunting season.

After analysis and review of this rule making, there will be a positive impact on jobs due to the additional days of hunting opportunity offered to waterfowl hunters.

These amendments are intended to implement Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39, and 481A.48. These amendments became effective on August 15, 2014.

The following amendments are adopted.

ITEM 1. Amend subrules 91.1(2) to 91.1(7) as follows:

91.1(2) Season dates - north zone. Special September teal season: September 6 through September 21. For all ducks: ~~September 21~~ October 4 through ~~September 25~~ October 19 and October 12 ~~25~~ through December 5 7.

91.1(3) Season dates - south zone. Special September teal season: September 6 through September 21. For all ducks: ~~September 21~~ October 4 through ~~September 25~~ October 8 and October 19 ~~18~~ through December 12 11.

91.1(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone. Special September teal season: September 6 through September 21. For all ducks: ~~September 21~~ October 4 through ~~September 25~~ October 8 and October 26 ~~25~~ through December 19 18.

91.1(5) Bag limit. Special September teal season: The daily bag limit is 6 teal of any species. For all ducks: The daily bag limit of ducks is 6, and may include no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 1 black duck, 3 wood ducks, 2 pintails, 1 mottled duck, ~~2 canvasbacks~~ 1 canvasback, 2 redheads, and 3 scaup. The daily bag limit of mergansers is 5, only 2 of which may be hooded mergansers.

91.1(6) Possession limit. For the special teal season and for all ducks: Possession limit is three times the daily bag limit.

91.1(7) Shooting hours. For the special teal season: Shooting hours are sunrise to sunset each day. For all ducks: Shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset each day.

ITEM 2. Amend subrules 91.3(2) to 91.3(4) as follows:

91.3(2) Season dates - north zone. Canada geese and brant: September ~~28~~ 27 through January ~~3,~~ 2, ~~2014~~ 2015. White-fronted geese: September ~~28~~ 27 through December ~~40~~ 9. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): September ~~28~~ 27 through January ~~42,~~ 41, ~~2014~~ 2015.

91.3(3) Season dates - south zone. Canada geese and brant: October ~~5~~ 4 through January ~~40,~~ 9, ~~2014~~ 2015. White-fronted geese: October ~~5~~ 4 through December ~~47~~ 16. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October ~~5~~ 4 through January ~~47,~~ 16, ~~2014~~ 2015.

91.3(4) Season dates - Missouri River zone. Canada geese and brant: October ~~42~~ 11 through January ~~47,~~ 16, ~~2014~~ 2015. White-fronted geese: October ~~42~~ 11 through December ~~24~~ 23. Light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese): October ~~42~~ 11 through January ~~47,~~ 16, ~~2014~~ 2015.

ITEM 3. Amend subrules 91.3(8) to 91.3(11) as follows:

91.3(8) Light goose conservation order season. Only light geese (white and blue-phase snow geese and Ross' geese) may be taken under a conservation order from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from January ~~48,~~ 17, ~~2014~~ 2015, through April 15, ~~2014~~ 2015.

a. to e. No change.

91.3(9) Cedar Rapids/Iowa City goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September ~~7~~ 6 through September ~~15~~ 14.

b. to d. No change.

91.3(10) Des Moines goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September ~~7~~ 6 through September ~~15~~ 14.

b. to d. No change.

91.3(11) Cedar Falls/Waterloo goose hunting zone.

a. Season dates. September ~~7~~ 6 through September ~~15~~ 14.

b. to d. No change.

ITEM 4. Amend rule 571—91.6(481A) as follows:

571—91.6(481A) Youth waterfowl hunt. A special youth waterfowl hunt will be held on ~~October 5 and 6~~ September 27 and 28 in the north duck hunting zone, October ~~42~~ 11 and ~~43~~ 12 in the south duck hunting zone, and October ~~49~~ 18 and ~~20~~ 19 in the Missouri River duck hunting zone. Youth hunters must be residents of Iowa as defined in Iowa Code section 483A.1A and less than 16 years old. Each youth hunter must be accompanied by an adult 18 years old or older. The youth hunter does not need to have a hunting license or stamps. The adult must have a valid hunting license and habitat stamp if normally required to have them to hunt and a state waterfowl stamp. Only the youth hunter may shoot ducks and coots. The adult may hunt for any other game birds for which the season is open. The daily bag and possession limits are the same as for the regular waterfowl season, as defined in rule 571—91.1(481A). All other hunting regulations in effect for the regular waterfowl season apply to the youth hunt.

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